

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, meet the Narvaez family. Maria Guadalupe Narvaez and her two daughters, Alma and Elia. Maria also has a son.

Ms. Narvaez works very hard to take care of her children. As a day care teacher at the Howard Area Community Center in Chicago, which is my District, she takes good care of other people's children, too. She cares for other people's children as if they were her own. In this picture, she is standing in front of a sign at Family Matters, a community organization in my District that helps hardworking families with a variety of services.

Sadly, the Narvaez family does not matter much to the Republican leadership. For those of us on this side of the aisle, though, her family does matter. So, too, do the families of the 12 million other children who were tossed aside by the Republican tax bill negotiators.

About 1 million of those 12 million children who were left out live with parents who are serving on active military duty, our veterans, or who have spouses serving in the Armed Forces, the very people that this House today earlier paid verbal tribute to, even as they were dumped from the tax cut bill. By the way, the tax credit we are talking about, this refundable tax credit was started in the Nixon and Ford administrations.

Those children would have benefited in 2003 from the child tax credit provisions that the Republicans stripped from their bill in order to provide even more giveaways to millionaires.

Denying Ms. Narvaez and her three children and our heroic families from their child tax credit is unfair. It is mean-spirited and it is bad for the economy. After all, Mrs. Narvaez is not likely to invest her money in Bermuda tax havens. If the Republicans had given her the child tax credit she deserves, she would be buying shoes and clothes and other necessities for her children from local businesses. The money would have gone straight into circulation, helping the economy and creating jobs.

The Narvaez family matters to me. If it were up to me, they would get the child tax credit that they need and deserve. Unfortunately, the decision was not up to me. Maria and Alma and Elia were not ignored by accident. They were deliberately and callously determined to be unimportant.

They were included. They had been in the tax bill that was in the United States Senate until it became clear that the tax cuts had gone too high. So instead of saying, okay, well, what can we do to bring that dollar figure down, maybe we ought to slightly reduce the tax break that we give to millionaires; oh, no, this is the family that they decided to go after and millions of others like them.

The Republican leader, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY), yesterday made it perfectly clear what his priorities and values were. He said very

succinctly, "There are a lot of other things that are more important." According to him, low income children do not deserve to be a priority because their families pay little or no income taxes, even if they work every day, even if they are good and productive members of their community, and even though they do pay taxes. They pay payroll taxes, sales taxes, property taxes.

Families matter to Democrats, including families living in the majority leader's District, that he and his party and his President have so shamefully, or should I say shamelessly, chosen to leave behind.

So what is more important to the majority Republican leader? How about providing tax breaks to special interests and to members of the Bush cabinet. Treasury Secretary John Snow was the CEO of CSX Corporation, a corporation that paid no Federal income taxes, zero, in 2001, 2000 and 1998. John Snow would get at least \$330,000 a year in dividend and capital gains tax cuts, more than Maria Guadalupe Narvaez would earn in 16 years at her current salary. That is how much his tax break is worth.

Most Americans think it is wrong to allow big companies to avoid taxes by stashing profits in offshore tax havens, but to the Republican leader, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY), it is more important to protect corporate tax evaders than to provide a little relief, a little help to Alma, Elia and Maria.

The Republicans took care of those who they cared about most and tossed aside those they do not care about at all. It is time for us to change the priorities of this country and give this deserving family the help that they need and want.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. WELDON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

CHILD TAX CREDIT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I applaud American enterprise. I applaud those successful individuals who even in the backdrop of a horrible economy are making millions and millions of dollars and seeing the money roll in as they count the dollars one by one by one by one. I applaud it. America is a capitalistic society. We encourage people to pull themselves up by their boot straps, be creative, found businesses and roll on to success.

We have looked at a world of corporate success over the last year, the

WorldComs of the world, the Enrons of the world, and the list goes on and on and on. In spite of the great successes and failures that these great corporations have had, the tax bill that we have just passed has decided to reward them and their many other friends. Why? Because my good friends on the other side of the aisle say that they pay taxes and we do not want to reward those deadbeat, hardworking Americans who make between \$10,500 to \$26,625, working every day, leaving at 4 and 5 and 6 a.m. in the morning, arriving home on the local mode of transportation at 6, 7, 8 or 9 p.m., working every day, preparing dinner for their family minimally and rising again the next day, because they do not pay taxes, Mr. Speaker.

Let me correct the record. They do pay taxes. They pay payroll taxes, property taxes, sales taxes. They pay taxes.

I am a little offended, Mr. Speaker, when someone can suggest that we are trying to change the IRS system into a welfare system. The one thing that we have said in this country is that all of us deserve the dignity and respect that comes from being simply a human being. All of us may come upon hard times. In fact, we have been so generous over the years that we have been willing to bail out large corporations, wealthy in their own right, but we have said we need to bail out these corporations. Many of us have said that maybe that should be called corporate welfare, but we believe that because the engine of this Nation is business that we need to provide assistance so that these corporations can survive, but yet Republicans want to denigrate hardworking Americans making \$10,500 a year and deny them a child tax credit.

Even more so, they do not want to come to this floor of the House for a lousy \$3.5 billion and correct the travesty that they created just 2 weeks ago. And do my colleagues know that, Mr. Speaker, even the child tax credit that is in the bill, do my colleagues know the real secret? It expires in 2004. Why? Because they did not want us to know that they were actually imploding the budget, building the deficit and they did not want us to know that really this is a meager pittance that they are giving on the child tax credit because it really expires in 2004 because they wanted to give us the mirage of a \$350 billion tax cut that ultimately may be \$1.6 trillion, and the way to do that is to have these little expiration dates.

Not only are we playing games with hardworking Americans, denigrating them and suggesting that they are only welfare recipients and the only way that they should be able to get a child tax credit is we make the IRS system or the tax system a welfare system, but let me tell my colleagues again the secret, that this actually does not give Americans much of a break because in the Republican plan it expires in 2004.

Mr. Speaker, I am here to stand here tonight to applaud the hardworking

Americans who get up every morning and do the things that make this country run. I am proud of standing with them. I am proud of the Americans that work overtime and deserve overtime compensation, and I will stand against any legislation that desires to eliminate overtime compensation for comp time that may be given or may not, just as I am willing to stand for all the teachers' aides, nurses' aides, all of the hardworking bus drivers, all the hardworking sanitation workers and anybody else that works hard every day helping this country run.

I want people to have a child tax credit, 6.5 million families, 12 million children. Any day of this year, any day of my career, I will stand with the hardworking Americans over those folks who are fat and happy talking about they pay taxes. Americans who work hard pay taxes, too.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Mrs. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. JONES of Ohio addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mr. OWENS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. OWENS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

VETERANS BENEFITS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. STRICKLAND) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. STRICKLAND. Mr. Speaker, I think the folks watching C-SPAN may sometimes get confused because they hear us stand here and give confusing or contradictory arguments. They do not know perhaps who to believe, but I want to speak about two things that we have done in the House recently, and I would challenge my colleagues on the other side of the aisle or the leadership within this administration to contradict what I am saying.

This House passed a budget not many weeks ago that cut veterans benefits over the next 10 years by \$6.2 billion. That is a fact. It is an absolute fact, and tonight, in the United States of America, while we have young men and women defending our Nation in Iraq, we are rationing health care to our Nation's veterans, rationing health care.

This administration has decided to say to a whole host of veterans, which they call priority eight veterans, you are high income and, consequently, you are out of here, you cannot participate in the VA health care system.

What do they mean by high income? In my District, they can be making as little as \$22,000 a year and be considered high income. Think of that. Not

only are they wanting to simply deny care for many veterans, but for others they want to impose additional financial burdens. They want to increase the cost of a prescription drug from \$7 to \$15 a prescription. They want to add a new annual enrollment fee of \$250. They want to increase the cost of a clinic visit from \$15 to \$20.

Mr. Speaker, when is it going to stop? When are we going to stop requiring more out of our veterans so that we can give larger tax cuts to the richest people in this country, many of whom have never served in the military?

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But we did something else in this House a few days ago. We passed a tax cut bill. And in that tax cut bill we took care of the millionaires. In fact, in that bill, if you have an annual income of \$1 million, you get a tax cut of about \$93,000. But we did something else that is shameful. We actually excluded children of poor working families from receiving the child tax credit benefit. It was not a mistake. It was done purposefully. We excluded about 12 million of America's children from that benefit. Think of that.

CNN reported that "Mr. DELAY, the conservative Texan, brushed aside criticism that the last bill didn't make an expanded child tax credit available to millions of poor families. But he said the House Republicans might support doing so if it prodded seniors to vote for a broader tax relief package."

In other words, the majority leader is going to hold poor children hostage in an attempt to get a larger tax break for his wealthy friends. I think that is shameful. I know of no other word that accurately describes that policy.

But do not take my word for it, Mr. Speaker. I hope those watching on C-SPAN do not just assume that because I am a Democrat that I am standing up here and taking an unfair shot at the Republicans. Senator JOHN MCCAIN is quoted in this same CNN story as saying, in regard to this leaving out 12 million children in the Republican tax plan, "My God, what kind of message are we sending when we leave out low-income families?"

And exactly in that category are the enlisted men and women who are fighting in Iraq. At this moment, in Iraq, are moms and dads who have children waiting here in this country. And the Republican tax plan excludes those children from this tax credit benefit.

Senator MCCAIN concludes his remarks by saying, "it's beyond belief." That is not a Democrat talking, that is Republican Senator JOHN MCCAIN.

Mr. Speaker, this issue gets to the heart of who we are as a people. We are willing to give huge tax cuts to the richest among us and exclude 12 million of America's children who live in poor families.

REPUBLICAN TAX RELIEF BILL

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida). Under

a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. McDERMOTT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, we all could bring a picture, as some of my colleagues have done, of a family who has contacted them and told them a story. Mine today was from a woman, a grandmother, who told me "I can't understand the unfairness of this bill. Why should my son and his wife and two children not be eligible for any kind of tax relief?"

Her son works at a job where he gets \$11 an hour. If you multiply that out times 40 hours a week, times 52 weeks a year, no vacation, you are going to wind up around \$22,000. And one of the interesting things is the answer that comes from deep in the heart of Texas, and that is "there are a lot of other things that are more important than that," giving tax breaks to this family. "To me, it is a little difficult to give tax relief to people that do not pay income tax."

Now, those are the words of our distinguished majority leader on the other side, which really reveals where he is coming from. He says, if you do not pay income taxes. Now, every single one, including my family and the family that the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) had up here and the family the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY) had up here all pay payroll taxes. They pay for Social Security and they pay for Medicare. They pay 7 percent of their paycheck for that, which means that my family that makes \$22,000 pays \$1,400 in taxes into the Medicare account and into the Social Security account.

The Republicans say we are going to take that money out of the Social Security account and that money out of the Medicare account and give it to the rich people, and we are not going to give one thin dime to somebody who is working 8 hours a day, 40 hours a week, 52 weeks a year. Not one thin dime. But we are going to give his payroll taxes to the rich. That is the only way we could be \$400 billion in debt this year is to keep borrowing from every account possible, including Medicare and Social Security.

Now, I want to take it a little bit further here. We have got more important things to do, the majority leader said. Well, what were the more important things we have to do? Today, we did not have a vote until 4:30. Oh, it is only, I suppose, a happenstance that that is when people got off the green from the Kemper Open golf course. That was what was more important than working on that issue.

Or, if you want to look at what we have done on the calendar this week, what have we done? Well, we congratulated Sammy Sosa for hitting 500 home runs. We renamed a post office in North Carolina. We dealt with some Indian water rights in the southwest. We did a land exchange in the Grand Teton National Park. We named a courthouse